AMERICA

By Keiko Ichiguchi

Volume 1 Chapter 4

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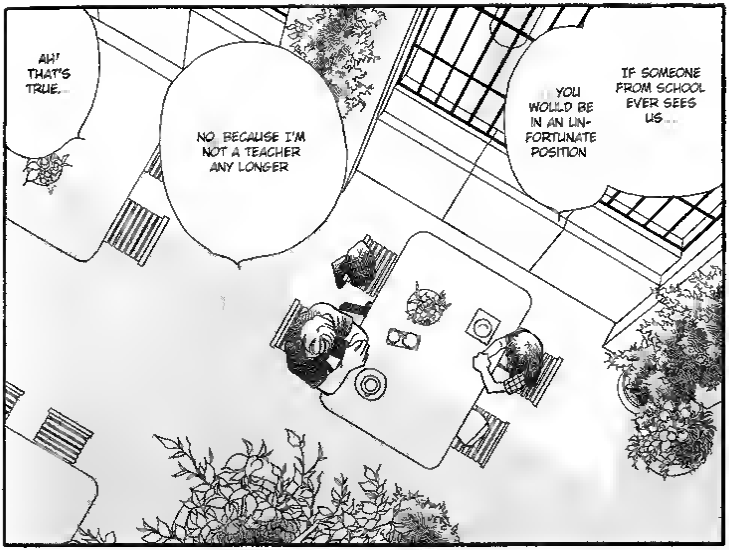
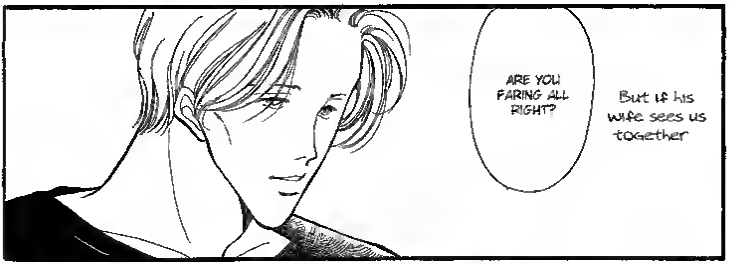
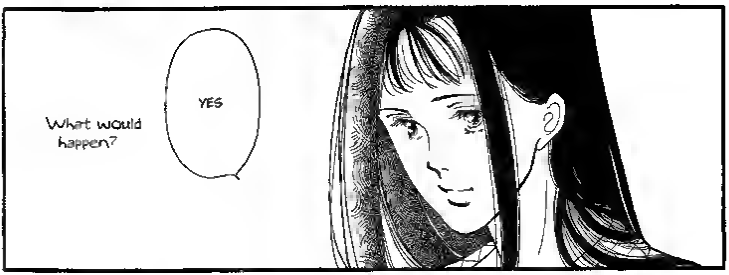
One day in the wonderful world of the Esthetique Realm, a single brave soul approached our admins with the most horrible news ever
Shekyl Proofreader
Whisper
Whisper
Whisper
Rayn Translator
Kuhr
Kitsune Admin
FROZEN
Rose? Did you hear me?
WOBBLE
Oh, crap!
Kitsune-sama! Are you OK?
BONK!
What could've been so bad as to render all of our admins totally unconcious?
Was it a worldwide shortage of manga? Did Shoujo manga cease to exist?
Oh, no! It was something much more sinister
STAFF SHORT-AGES!
SNAP!
HUGE PILES OF TRANSLATED CHAPTERS...
SPREAD THE NEWS, WE NEED NEW EDITORS AND QC-ERS STAT!
If you think you've got what it takes, contact us at esthetiquestaff@gmail.com.

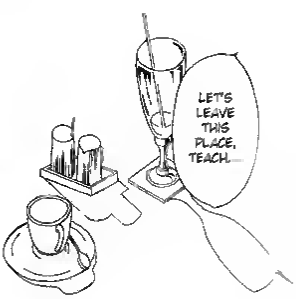
AMERICA

‹ chapter 4 ›

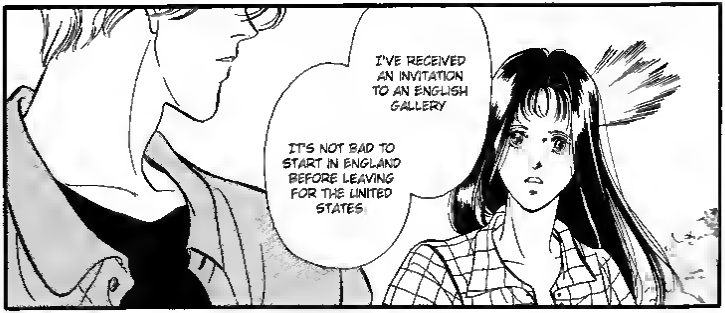

AH! THAT'S TRUE...
NO, BECAUSE I'M NOT A TEACHER ANY LONGER
...YOU WOULD BE IN AN UN-FORTUNATE POSITION
IF SOMEONE FROM SCHOOL EVER SEES US...


ARE YOU FARING ALL RIGHT?
But if his wife sees us together

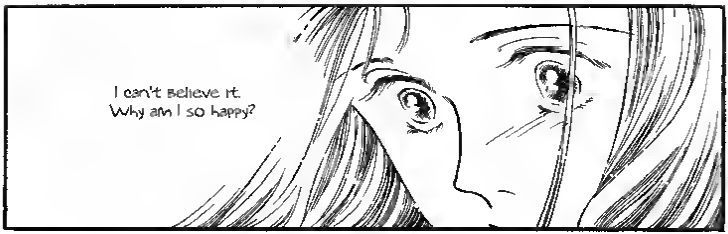

What would happen?
YES



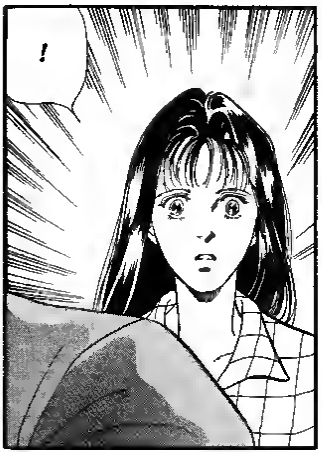
How can he be so calm?



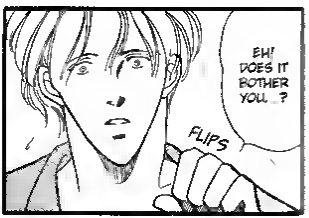
I'M GOING TO BE IN CHARGE OF A COLUMN IN A TEEN MAGAZINE... ...PUBLISHED BY A BOOK HOUSE.
WHAT DO YOU SAY? I MANAGED WELL, DIDN'T I?
I will never feel pathetic!
Say something!
NAE?
TURNS
...THAT'S HUGE!
YOU MADE IT! YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO THAT JOB!
YOU'VE FULFILLED YOUR DREAM! I'M REALLY HAPPY FOR YOU!
AH!
What?!

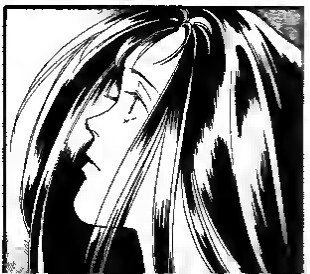

I can't believe it.
Why am I so happy?

Why is it always
the same?


!

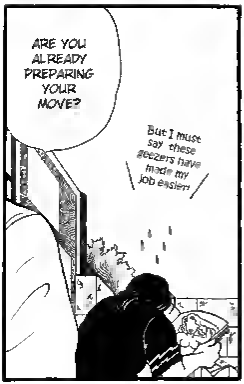
LISTEN, TEACH...
Always...
I...


EH! DOES IT BOTHER YOU...?
FLIPS

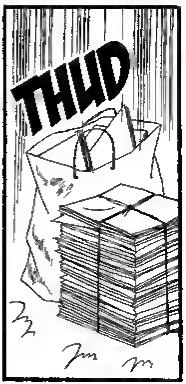


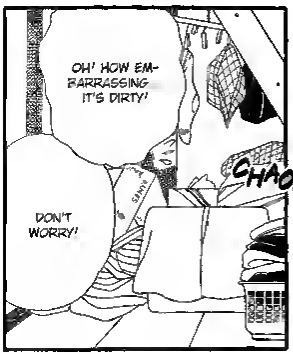
DUNK
GO AHEAD, NAE! CATCH UP WITH HIM...
AH...!
KOJI...
...
I'LL WRITE YOU

I'VE HAD ENOUGH NOW!
WHAT?!
KOJI!!!
WAIT, KOJI!
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!
I LOOK LIKE A FOOL..


ARE YOU ALREADY PREPARING YOUR MOVE?
But I must say these freezers have made my job easier!

WOOOWW! I CAN'T BELIEVE THE AMOUNT OF OLD MAGAZINES!


THUD


OH! HOW EMBARRASSING IT'S DIRTY!
CHAOS!
DON'T WORRY!

TAKAKO...

YOU WON'T REGRET IT?
NEXT WEEK.
WHEN ARE YOU LEAVING?
WHERE ARE YOU STAYING?
I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT...
THEY'RE THE ONES WHO ARE GOING TO FIND ME SOMETHING
WHAT'S GOING TO BECOME OF YOU?
FAR APART FROM YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS.
IT'S PRECISELY YOU, WHO MADE ME UNDERSTAND THIS.
IF I DON'T TRY, I'LL NEVER KNOW.

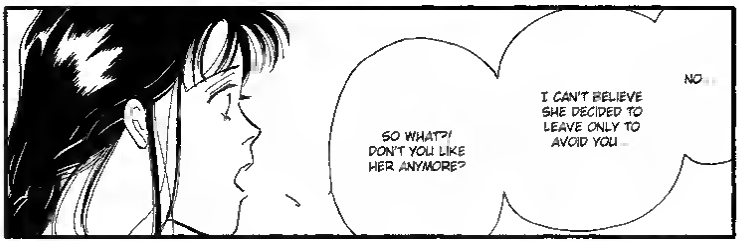
I APOLOGIZE FOR WHAT I SAID...
DROP IT! THERE'S NO NEED FOR EXCUSES!
YOU DIDN'T WANT ME BUT IT'S YOUR CHOICE!
...IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I ENTERED A BOY'S ROOM!
WHAT? DON'T YOU HAVE A BOYFRIEND? I DON'T BELIEVE YOU!
I ASSURE YOU, SINCE THREE YEARS AGO...
WHEN I ALMOST GOT RAPED IN THE UNITED STATES
!
WHAT? WHAT DID YOU SAY?!

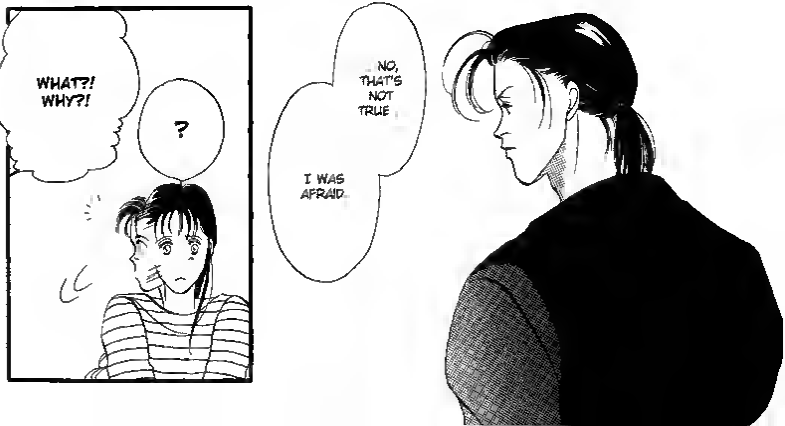
I'M AFRAID OF MEN, INCLUDING YOU.
NAOYUKI... DO YOU STILL WANT ME?

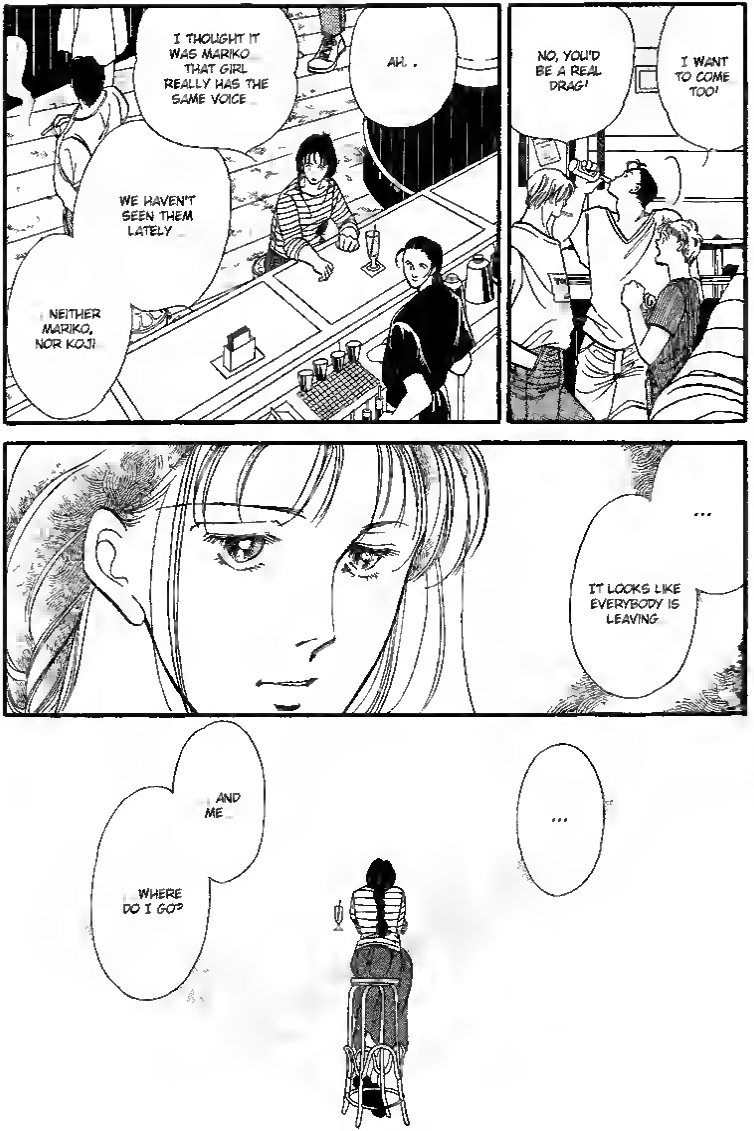
I NEED MONEY.
I HEARD YOU'D SETTLED DOWN.
WHY HAVE YOU DECIDED TO DO THAT JOB?
TAKE THIS BAG AND EXCHANGE IT WITH THEIRS.
UNDER-STOOD
FOR YOUR CHICK?
NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
IF EVERYTHING GOES WELL, WE'RE GOING TO WORK TOGETHER AGAIN.
SO BE IT
MEET YOU TONIGHT
SCREECH...

THERE ISN'T ANYONE WE KNOW.
YEAH.
HUEY TOLD ME HE HAD ANOTHER JOB TONIGHT.
HAVE YOU SEEN TAKAKO?

...ITALY?
WHAT?!
SHE TOLD ME SHE WOULD STUDY THEATRE ...
FOR AT LEAST TWO YEARS...
THAT CAN'T BE TRUE! I HAD NO IDEA!
NEITHER DID I. SHE TOLD ME YESTERDAY.
THAT WAY I'M SURE I WON'T STAND A CHANCE WITH HER, HA HA...


NO...
I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE DECIDED TO LEAVE ONLY TO AVOID YOU...
SO WHAT?! DON'T YOU LIKE HER ANYMORE?


WHAT?! WHY?!
?
NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE...
I WAS AFRAID...

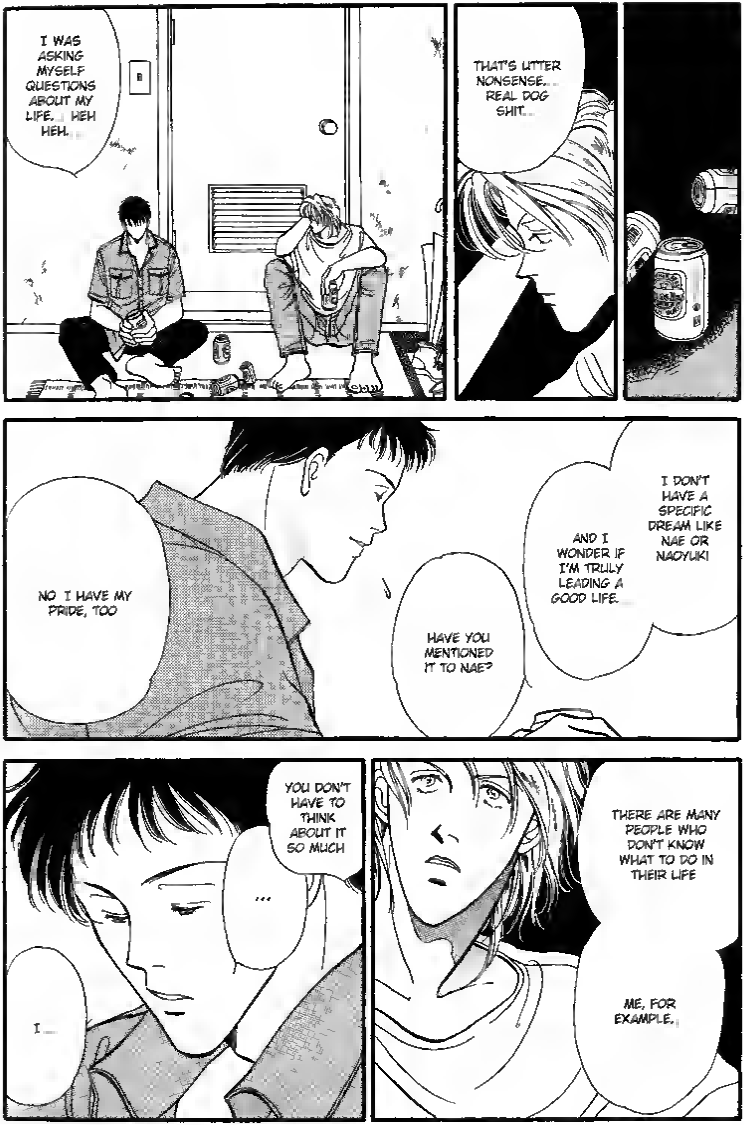

I THOUGHT IT WAS MARIKO THAT GIRL REALLY HAS THE SAME VOICE
AH..
WE HAVEN'T SEEN THEM LATELY
NEITHER MARIKO, NOR KOJI
NO, YOU'D BE A REAL DRAG!
I WANT TO COME TOO!
...
IT LOOKS LIKE EVERYBODY IS LEAVING
...
AND ME
WHERE DO I GO?

COME ON, DROP IT!
YOU MUST BE CRAZY TO SLEEP THERE!
YOU SCARED ME!
OH! SHIT!
HE'S JUST SOME DRUNK GUY!
WE DON'T GIVE A DAMN

STAND STILL IN THE WORLD
IN AMERICA
Where to ?

SURPRISED
AH!
FLIP
HUEY...
WELL, DROP IT...
WERE YOU LOOKING FOR MY HOUSE?
Scary.
DO YOU ALWAYS LUG THIS AROUND?
OH, SORRY, KOJI!
COME IN...
...
I WANTED TO HAVE A TALK WITH YOU
YES

MARIKO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!
DON'T BE A PAIN, DUDE
OH! KOJI!
HUEY! HI!
BANG
CAN YOU LEAVE US ALONE? I NEED TO SPEAK TO KOJI
YES
HAS SOMEBODY COME BY?
YES
NEVER OPEN IT WITHOUT ASKING WHO'S THERE
OF COURSE IT'S BECAUSE I'M A FEMINIST!
SO? WHAT'S UP?
CLACK
YOU'RE GENEROUS


I WAS ASKING MYSELF QUESTIONS ABOUT MY LIFE... HEH HEH...
THAT'S UTTER NONSENSE... REAL DOG SHIT...
I DON'T HAVE A SPECIFIC DREAM LIKE NAE OR NAOYUKI
AND I WONDER IF I'M TRULY LEADING A GOOD LIFE...
HAVE YOU MENTIONED IT TO NAE?
NO I HAVE MY PRIDE, TOO
YOU DON'T HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT SO MUCH
...
I...
THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WHO DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO IN THEIR LIFE
ME, FOR EXAMPLE.

I'LL ALSO GO TO AMERICA
THIS IS WHAT MOSTLY RESEMBLES A DREAM TO ME
EXCUSE ME I HAVE A SITUATION TO TAKE CARE OF
OKAY
BANG
BANG
BANG
!
HUEY! ARE YOU THERE?!

YOU DID A GOOD JOB HERE'S YOUR SHARE
THANKS
THE NEXT JOB IS THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW
SEE YOU AT THE OFFICE
OKAY
? ? ? ? ? ?
OPENS
WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?
CASH?
WHAT'S IN THAT ENVE-LOPE?
HUEY...
CLICK

IT'S IN ORDER TO GO TO AMERICA.
CAN I ALSO DO THE SAME JOB THAT YOU DO?

...
I'M HAPPY ABOUT THAT
IF YOU FIND A LETTER FOR YOUR FATHER, PUT IT ASIDE
NAE, YOU HAVEN'T BEEN GOING OUT IN THE EVENING LATELY
IT'S FOR ME!
FROM WHOM?
AH!
RUSTLE
HE SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR HIS WORK
ALL RIGHT
Tetsuma Mike
...FROM A FRIEND

I'm not writing you in order to get rid of my qualms, but I wanted to tell you that I'm worried about you... really... I felt so relieved to see you happy, but...

RUSTLE

...At the same time, I felt sad, because...

RUSTLE

CREAK

...I'm glad to have met you by chance on that day. I'm glad to know you're fine.

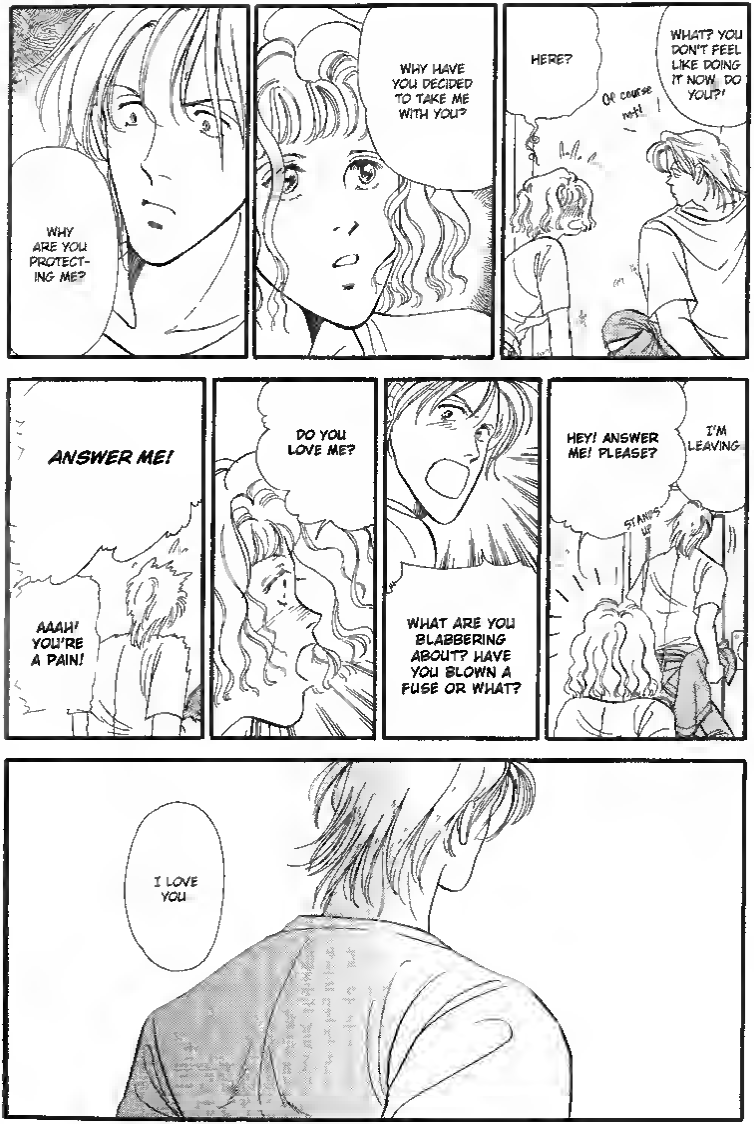
...I realized that you didn't need me anymore... I wonder if all that is thanks to this boy who followed us the other day, or if it's because your dream is about to become true.

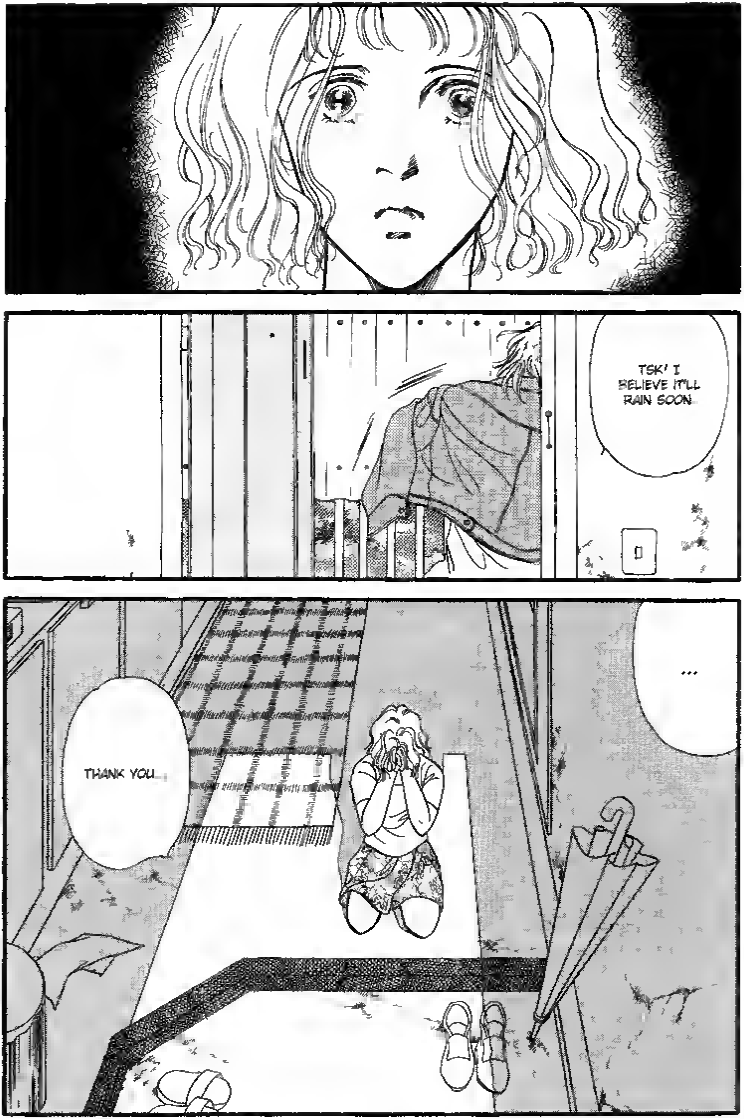
Be that as it may, I'm happy for you. You saved me when I was in the middle of a crisis. I wholeheartedly hope that you'll find happiness.

I have an American friend who runs a Japanese restaurant in Los Angeles. He's looking for a cook. I'm sending you his address. If one of your friends wants to go over there, he might give him a hand...

It's today
SLY DOG
I'm going to London, on the 16th of August, on the 9 o'clock flight. I'd really like to see you again before I leave..."
You want me to come after you till the end.
INSTEAD OF TRYING TO KEEP ME
NAE WHERE ARE YOU?
NAE?!
CLACK

HELLO?!
TO KEEP IT AT MY PLACE? ARE YOU MAD?!
WHAT? POST-PONED?!
AND WHAT AM I TO DO WITH THAT THING?
I HAVE THE KEYS SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT FOR ME.
AND DON'T OPEN THE DOOR TO ANYBODY
I'LL BE RETURNING HOME VERY LATE JUST GO TO SLEEP
TONIGHT I'M WORKING AT JEREMY'S BAR
AND BE-SIDES...
HUEY...
HUEY?
SHIT! THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG! BASTARDS!
I NEED TO ASK YOU SOME-THING

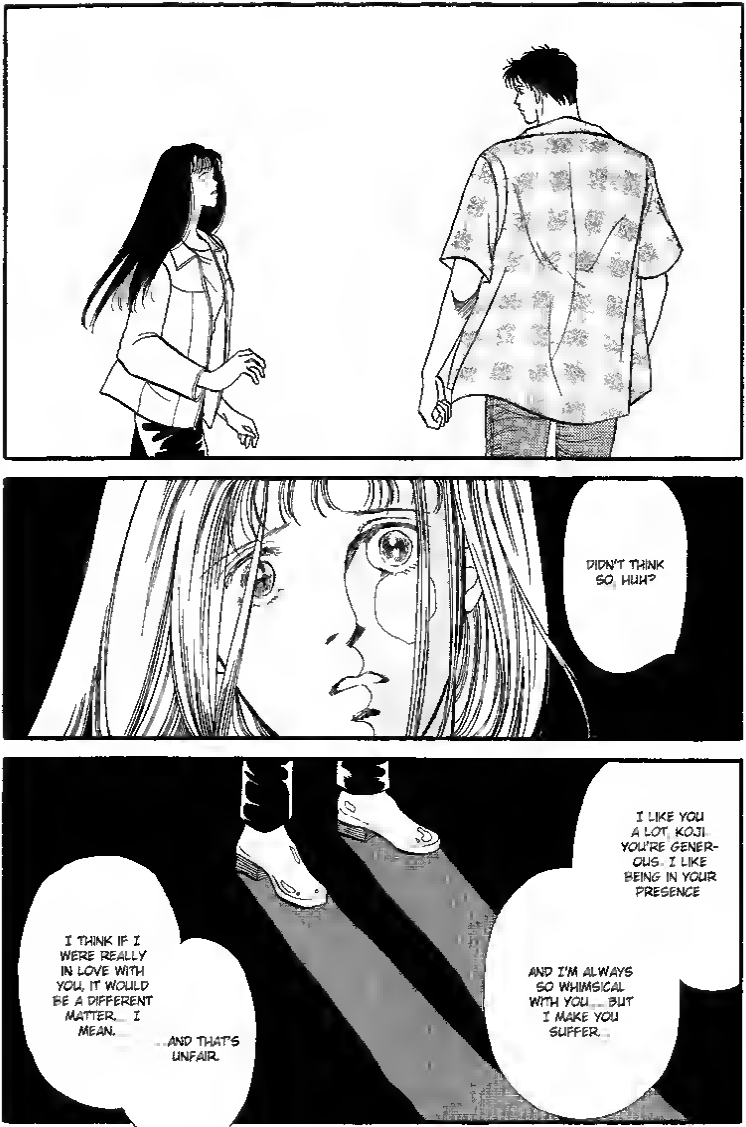

WHY ARE YOU PROTECTING ME?
WHY HAVE YOU DECIDED TO TAKE ME WITH YOU?
HERE?
OF COURSE NOT!
WHAT? YOU DON'T FEEL LIKE DOING IT NOW, DO YOU?
ANSWER ME!
AAAH! YOU'RE A PAIN!
DO YOU LOVE ME?
WHAT ARE YOU BLABBERING ABOUT? HAVE YOU BLOWN A FUSE OR WHAT?
HEY! ANSWER ME! PLEASE?
I'M LEAVING
STANDS UP
I LOVE YOU

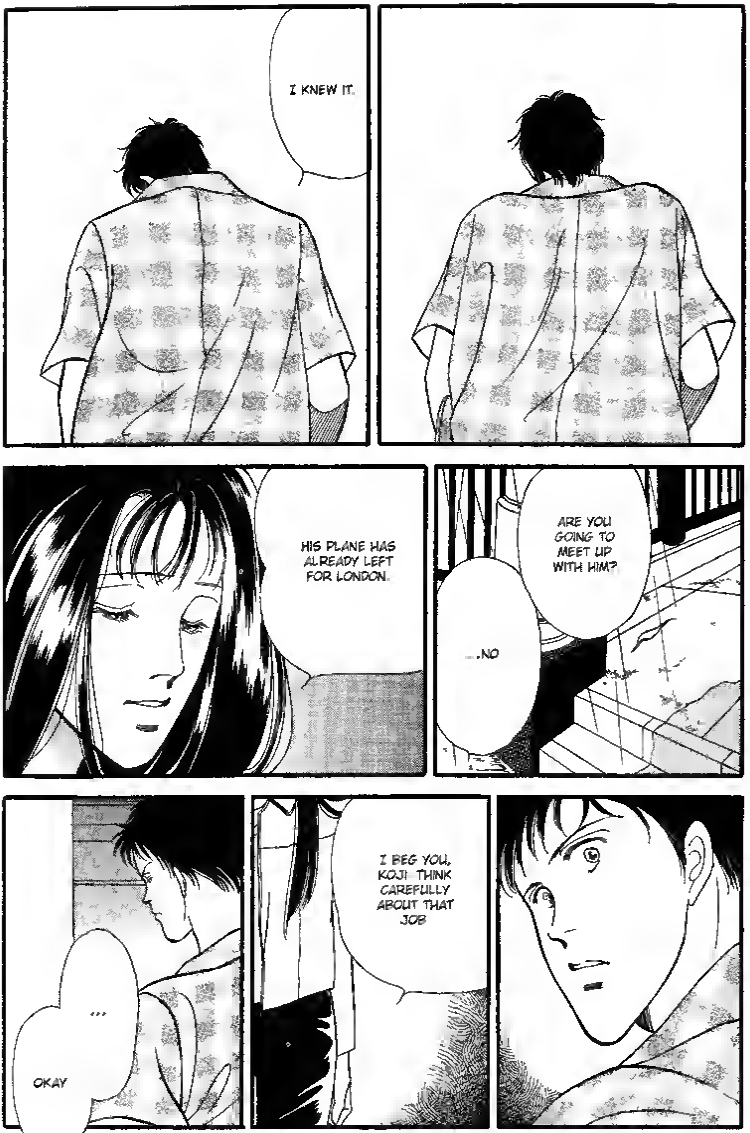

TSK! I BELIEVE IT'LL RAIN SOON
...
THANK YOU...

NO. IT'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT
NAE, COME IN!
DRIP
DRIP
DRIP
I'LL WAIT HERE. I HAVE SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO TELL HIM...
But that's Huey!
Koji!!!
DON'T INSIST, KOJI. I TOLD YOU THAT YOU WEREN'T CUT OUT FOR THAT KIND OF JOB.

NAE!
!
IT'S DANGER-OUS FOR YOU TOO, ISN'T IT?
WHY?!
I WANTED TO SPEAK WITH KOJI.
UM.
ME TOO...
DOESN'T MATTER I HAVE MY REASONS
HEY!
SEE YOU LATER
...IF YOU WERE ABLE TO WORK IN AMERICA, WOULD THAT BE OF INTEREST TO YOU?
KOJI
WHAT?!
UM. LET'S SEE...

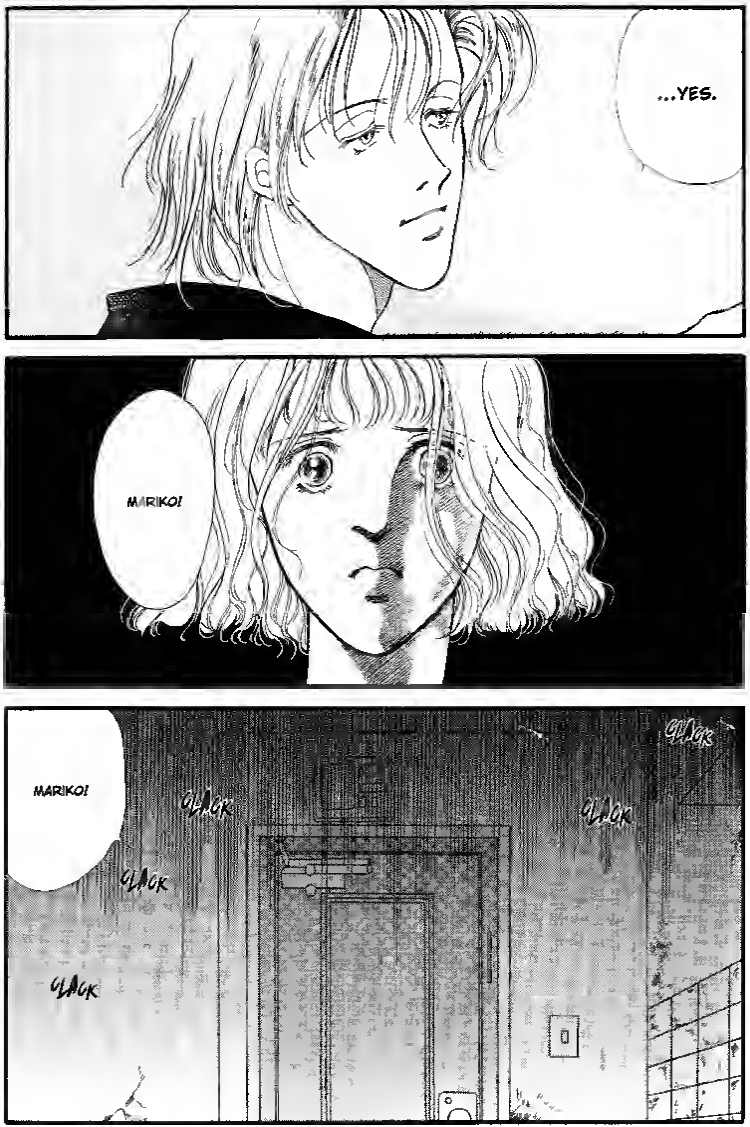
WHO TOLD YOU ABOUT IT?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?!
IF YOU WANT, YOU COULD
WELL... THERE'S A JAPANESE RESTAURANT IN LOS ANGELES WHO'S LOOKING FOR A COOK
...WAS IT HIM?
KOJI!!!
IF I WERE TO LEAVE, WOULD YOU MISS ME AT ALL?
THERE'S NO USE IN TAKING IT OUT ON HIM.
DON'T YOU THINK THAT THIS WOULD BE A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU?


DIDN'T THINK SO, HUH?
I LIKE YOU A LOT, KOJI. YOU'RE GENEROUS. I LIKE BEING IN YOUR PRESENCE
AND I'M ALWAYS SO WHIMSICAL WITH YOU... BUT I MAKE YOU SUFFER...
I THINK IF I WERE REALLY IN LOVE WITH YOU, IT WOULD BE A DIFFERENT MATTER... I MEAN...
...AND THAT'S UNFAIR.


I KNEW IT.
HIS PLANE HAS ALREADY LEFT FOR LONDON.
ARE YOU GOING TO MEET UP WITH HIM?
...NO
I BEG YOU, KOJI! THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT THAT JOB
...
OKAY

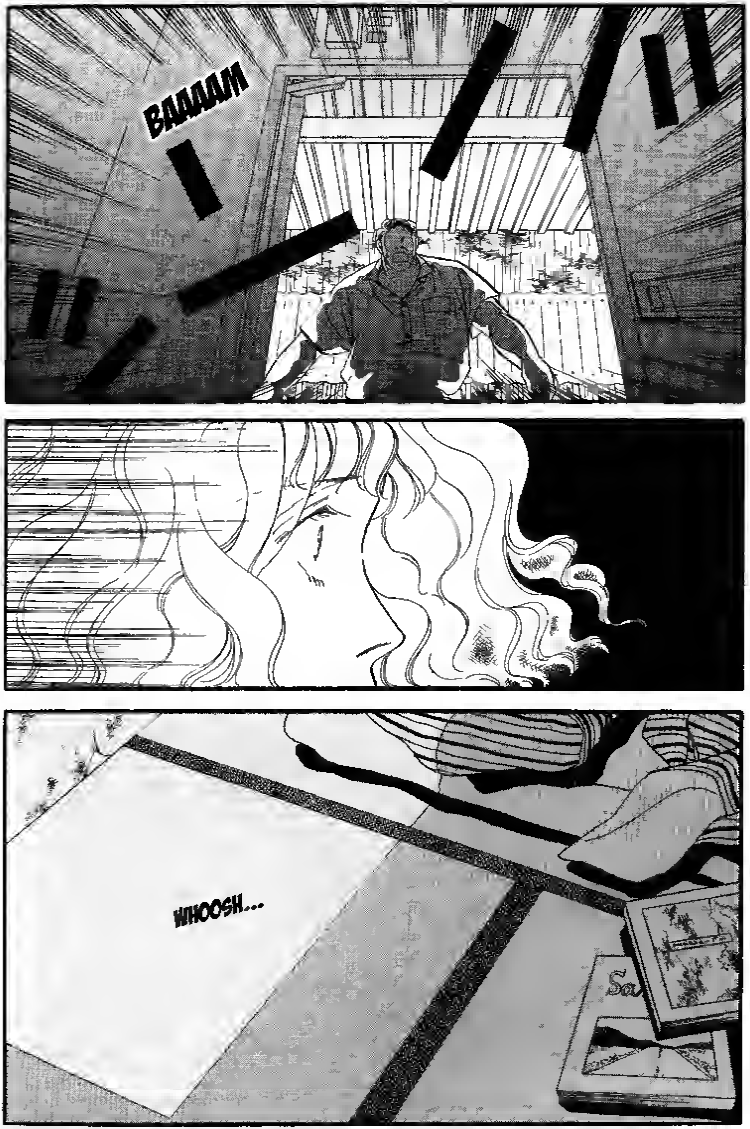
SSSSH
HEY! KOJI! HOW ARE YOU?
NAE! COME IN! IT'S STARTING TO RAIN!
...
LADY OF ROCK

HELLO, NAE... HOW ARE YOU?
FINE AND YOU?
TAKAKO!
AH!
ONLY MARIKO IS MISSING.
RIGHT, HUEY?!
Happy♡:
ABOUT BLOODY TIME! ALMOST EVERYONE IS HERE TODAY!


...YES.
MARIKO!
MARIKO!
GLACK
GLACK
GLACK
GLACK
GLACK

CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
MARIKO, I KNOW YOU'RE THERE...
...AND I NOTICED YOU HANGING THE LAUNDRY OUT ON THE TERRACE TALK ABOUT A SURPRISE!
I KNOW IT. I SAW THAT BOY LEAVING THIS PLACE. BY CHANCE...
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
...THE OTHER NIGHT I WAS WRONG, BUT...
I LIKE YOU A LOT, YOU KNOW
...MARIKO...
PLEASE, OPEN THIS DOOR.
CLACK
BANG
MARIKO! I KNOW THAT YOU CAN HEAR ME!
THUD

MPF
MPF
BANG
BANG
BANG
MARIKO!!!
BANG
MARIKO!!!
CLATTER
!
crash


BADAAAM
WHOOSH...